Golf Starter

In the eyes of the customer, you <u>are</u> the golf program!

What's Here…

- Introduction
- Key Responsibilities
- Basic Golf Etiquette
- Hours of Operation
- Customer Service
- Diplomacy
- Typical Shift Procedures

- Player Spacing
- Pace of Play
- The Rules
- Tournaments
- Weather & Safety
- Additional Information
- That's all…

Introduction, Page 1 of 4

- There are three general types of people at the golf center – the golfer, other customers and the golf ambassadors
  - Every golf program employee is a potential *golf ambassador*
- Whatever your job and task at hand, **you** are the golf program – what you do is what the golfer sees and believes to be “the way it is”

Introduction, Page 2 of 4

- When your service and behavior is exceptional, the golfer will typically view the golf program as exceptional – when your service and behavior is average or below par, that's pretty much how the customer will assess the program
- You can positively affect the golfer's experience!
- This training nugget is about excelling as the Golf Starter!

Introduction, Page 3 of 4

- The job of Starter is one that requires great tact and diplomacy
- The requirement to verify payment of greens fees, organize individual players (singles and doubles) into threesomes and foursomes, factor in “walk-ons”, start players/groups on-time, adjust start times to maintain applicable player spacing, explain and enforce local course rules and policy including the daily cart path rules, etc., can place the Starter in an important customer service role

Introduction, Page 4 of 4

- Superior interpersonal skills are needed to ensure first tee management and policy enforcement is perceived as assistance rather than criticism, punishment, or unnecessary restriction

Key Responsibilities,
Page 1 of 2

- Affirm rental car and hand cart readiness and availability
- Affirm first tee and adjacent practice areas clean, set up and ready for business
- Manage the first tee and integral practice and transition areas
- Welcome players and verify registration and payment of applicable fees
- Manage pairings and spacing

Key Responsibilities,
Page 2 of 3

- Verify that golfers have:
  - Daily cart rules and grounds information
  - Course and weather conditions
  - Pin positions & course yardage
- Equip carts/golfers with score cards, yardage booklets (where available), pencils and applicable information handouts
- Remind golfers to maintain pace of play, to play safely, and to dress and behave appropriately

Key Responsibilities,
Page 3 of 3

- Answer questions / solve problems
- Start golfers
- Facilitate tournaments, events and outings
- Communicate with Marshals/Rangers to help maintain desired pace-of-play
- Communicate with Pro-Shop
- Communicate with Beverage Cart operator(s)
- Secure and maintain starter area

Basic Golf Etiquette,
Page 1 of 3

- When on the course, all staff members must abide by the basic golf etiquette by which golfers play:
  - Don’t move, talk or make noise while in the immediate proximity of a golfer preparing to hit
  - Minimize volume on 2-way radio or use headset
  - Don’t talk on the two-way, PA system, or cell phone while a golfer is preparing to hit
  - Keep cell phones on a low ring volume or buzzer

Basic Golf Etiquette,
Page 2 of 2

- When on the course, adhere to the daily golf cart rules: 90-degree, all fairways, cart path only, etc.
- Don’t drive into the approximate ball landing area of approaching golfers (See notes below and on slide 45…)
- Never drive the cart onto or across a putting surface or tee box; into or through a sand or water hazard; or onto or through other “restricted” areas such as ground under repair, protected environmental areas, etc.
- Don’t stand, drive or move directly behind the direction of a player’s putting line

Hours of Operation.
Page 1 of 2

- Hours vary from day-to-day; month-to-month; season-to-season
- Typical operations:
  - 15-30 minutes before first tee-time until released by the duty manager
  - Weekends and holidays
  - On training holidays during winter months
- As the days warm and lengthen, length of operations (Starter coverage) typically lengthen
- The starter’s day/shift ends when notified by the duty manager

Hours of Operation,
Page 2 of 2

- In addition to normal calendar operations, starters also help facilitate special events, outings and tournaments
  - Typically, the starter will manage first tee throughout the outing / tournament until released by the duty manager
- To be of most value to course operation, safety and player assistance, you must be working the first tee from that immediate area, not from the Snack Bar, Golf Shop, Manager's Office, etc.

Customer Service,
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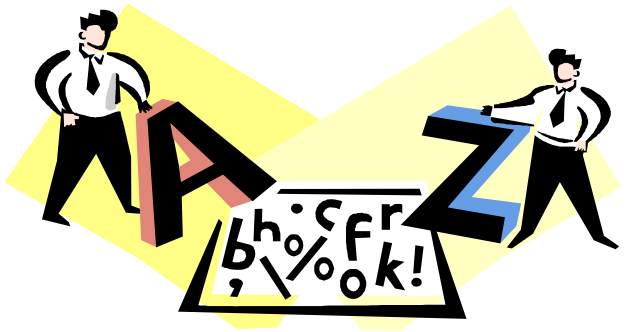

Remember – in the eyes of the customer YOU are the
golf program:

- Know the program's products and prices
- Know the golf program so you can answer questions
  - Rates – Upcoming events
  - Tee times – General course policy, etc.
- Find out how customers want to be treated (ask) then treat them like that -- always

Customer Service,
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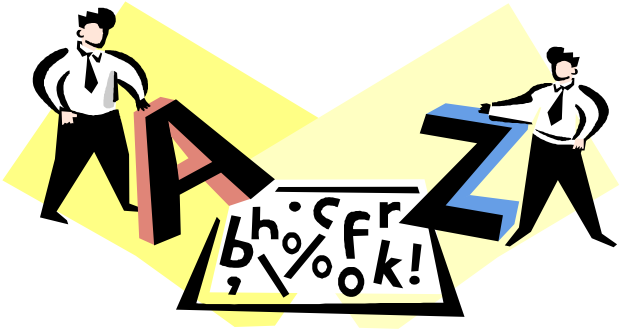
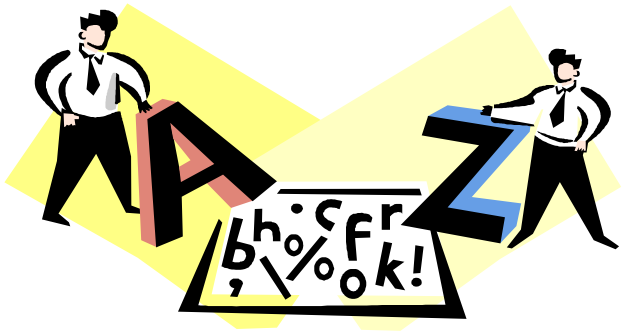


- Always use good manners
- Smile genuinely and greet golfers (by name if you know)
- Do not curse/swear, drink, chew, or smoke while on duty
- Always wear clean clothes, maintain a clean, neat and professional appearance, and wear applicable “uniform” items
- Look and act like a professional
- Clean teeth, fresh breath and a bright, warm, winning smile are always important

Customer Service,
Page 3 of 5



- Assisting the customers in a positive way helps you, your program, and your organization's reputation
- Providing good customer service is essential to:
  - your job security
  - future job/career opportunities
  - how you feel about what you do
  - success of the golf program
  - repeat customer patronage
- Continue your own learning
- Teach others whenever you can

Customer Service,
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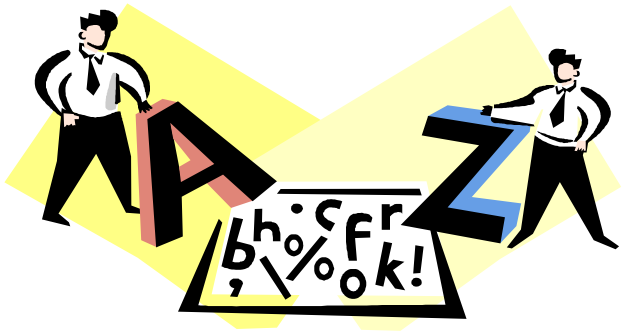

- Know that customers' needs are a priority
- Listen effectively to ensure you understand the customer
- Don't take complaints personally
- Always respect the customer
- Do whatever you can reasonably do to exceed customer expectations
- Work as if you own the business

Customer Service,
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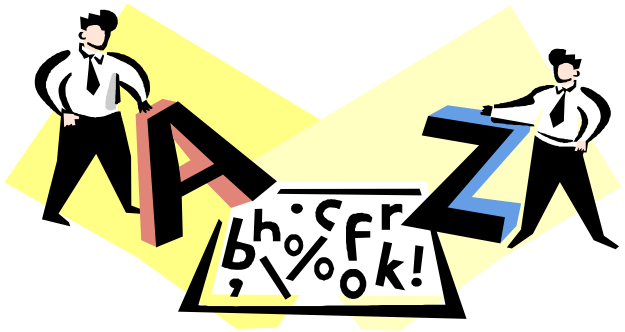

- Take ownership of customer problems.
- Make sure problems get resolved. You may have to ask for help, but be responsible. Customers are tolerant when somebody is willing to follow up and make sure problems are handled.
- Serve! Always be the customer's solution, never their problem!

Diplomacy,
Page 1 of 3

- Greet each group and ask how you can assist
- Get to know the members and players
- Approach every “situation” as a problem solver and golf program ambassador, rather than an “enforcer”
- How you behave; how you talk; your posture; facial expressions and other body language all determine how the golfer will hear, see and accept your guidance

Diplomacy,
Page 2 of 3

- Use a questioning approach rather than a telling approach
- First ensure the golfer understands what he or she did (e.g., making divots on the tee without filling/repairing)
- Explain the rule, policy or player requirement
- Thank the player/s for their understanding and agreement

Diplomacy,
Page 3 of 3

- It is strongly recommended that Starters receive training in:
  - Effective communication
  - Dealing with difficult people / situations
  - Customer Service behavior (Star Service: AECR)

Typical Shift Procedures,
Page 1 of 13

Preparation and Setup

- If so scheduled, arrive well ahead of the time you are scheduled to start facilitating the daily golf rounds or event
- Obtain print-out of reservations / tee times for the day or event schedule
- Obtain and set up the Starter’s pairing sheet
- Obtain and discuss weather forecast for the day
- Discuss cart path policy for the day

Typical Shift Procedures,
Page 2 of 13

- Find out and record where the pins/flags are positioned
- Find out what areas of the course are under repair or are otherwise restricted
- Review schedule of upcoming events, outings and tournaments (make notes or copy the schedule)

Typical Shift Procedures,
Page 3 of 13

- Get briefing on special assignments, duties, rules, policy, etc., if hosting a tournament or other special outing / event
- Get other briefs/directions as necessary
- Find out if Marshals/Rangers will be on duty
- Obtain and test two-way radio and headset (or cell phone system, if applicable)
- Ensure starter shack, podium, or cart is clean, equipped, powered up, unlocked and ready to go

Typical Shift Procedures,
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- Inspect first tee area, practice green, driving range, chip, pitch and sand hazard practice areas as applicable to your facility and your duty assignments – ensure areas are clean, groomed, properly set up and ready for business
- Ensure rental cars and pull carts are clean, fully equipped, properly loaded and ready to go
- Use a starter’s checklist to brief golfers

Typical Shift Procedures,

Page 5 of 13

Daily Operations – Open Play

- Know who is supposed to be on the course throughout the day / shift
- Use Tee-Time Reservation report and your Pairings Sheet to start golfers and keep track of play
- Call players to the first tee
- Greet and Welcome all players to the course
- Get to know the members and players
- Confirm players have registered in the Pro Shop and paid applicable greens and cart fees

Typical Shift Procedures,
Page 6 of 13

- Help organize threesomes and foursomes from singles and doubles and factor in walk-ons
- Brief players:
  - Explain the cart path policy for the day (and why):
    - Anywhere on fairways (or anywhere except…)
    - 90-degree
    - Cart path only
    - Cart path for specific areas
    - Ground under repair
    - Tees, greens, collars, hazards, and other “no-drive” areas

Typical Shift Procedures,
Page 7 of 13

- Brief Players, cont:
  - Confirm players have score cards, yardage cards / charts (if available for your course), and pencils
  - Ask if they have or would like to have copies of your handouts: *(provide a copy for each golfer)*
    - Pace-of-play: 18 holes in X-hrs and X-min; 9 holes in X-hrs and X-min, and keep up with group in front of you
    - Golf course care
    - Upcoming golf tournaments, outings, and special events
    - Upcoming F&FR services and special events
  - Actually mention upcoming golf and F&FR events

Typical Shift Procedures,

Page 8 of 13

- Brief Players, cont:
  - Suggest Tee Box selection suited to players experience and skill *(based on their handicap or description of play or recent scores)*
  - Explain current course conditions
    - Green speed and condition
    - Ground under repair
    - Recent treatments of fertilizer, herbicide and/or pesticide and possible health implications / and applicable safety precautions
    - Recent fairway / greens / tee box aeration or other treatments that may affect play

Typical Shift Procedures,

Page 9 of 13

- Brief Players, cont:
  - Yardage and course difficulty
    - Slope and rating
    - Pin locations if standardized throughout
    - Pin indicators (e.g., red front, white middle, blue back)
    - Yardage measured from (what point) on tee box
    - Yardage measured to (what point) on greens
    - Fairway yardage markers
      - Signs and markers
      - Cart path indicators
      - Sprinkler heads
      - Tree or shrubbery locations (if planted as yardage indicators)
      - Color coded marker poles, etc.
    - Brief use of in-cart GPS, if so equipped

Typical Shift Procedures,

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- Brief Players, cont:
  - Locations of restrooms and water coolers
  - On-course beverage and snack cart if scheduled
  - Prohibitions
  - Rules unique to course (e.g., balls crossing roads are out of bounds; repeat shot if ball hits power lines crossing #12 fairway; don’t tee off until aircraft lands if planes are landing over fairway #6, trees painted white indicate out-of-bounds, etc.)

Typical Shift Procedures,

Page 11 of 13

- Brief Players, cont:
  - Course marking for hazards, lateral hazards, out-of-bounds, etc.
  - Expected weather
  - How the course signals lightning and other severe weather conditions
  - Procedure to follow if alarm signals lightning and other severe weather conditions
- Ask golfers if they have questions or need anything
- Wish each golfer a fun, good and safe round of golf

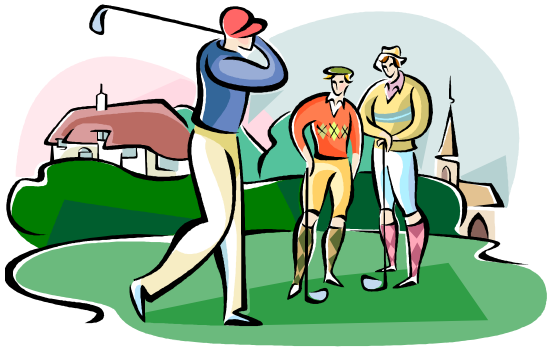
Typical Shift Procedures,
Page 12 of 13

- Wait for players to hit their shots on the first tee before “announcing/calling” the next group to the tee
- Communicate regularly with the Marshals/ Rangers and the Pro Shop Staff to help maintain an acceptable pace of play
- Help maintain the area of the first tee and practice facilities:
  - Pick up trash, bottles, cans, etc., and place in provided receptacles
  - Pick up broken tees, cigarette and cigar butts, etc.
  - Notify Pro Shop when trash receptacles are nearly full or dump them if part of your assignments

Typical Shift Procedures,
Page 13 of 13

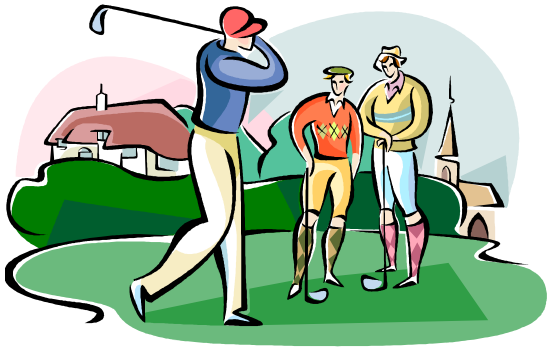
- Ensure player safety (on a case-by-case basis)
  - Provide minor first aid assistance as needed
  - Follow locally defined procedures for major accidents, injuries or illnesses
  - Caution players from hitting into the player group in front of them
  - Discuss safety with groups waiting and taking practice swings
  - Advise players of approaching inclement weather
  - Follow installation procedures regarding emergency assistance to deal with security issues

Player Spacing



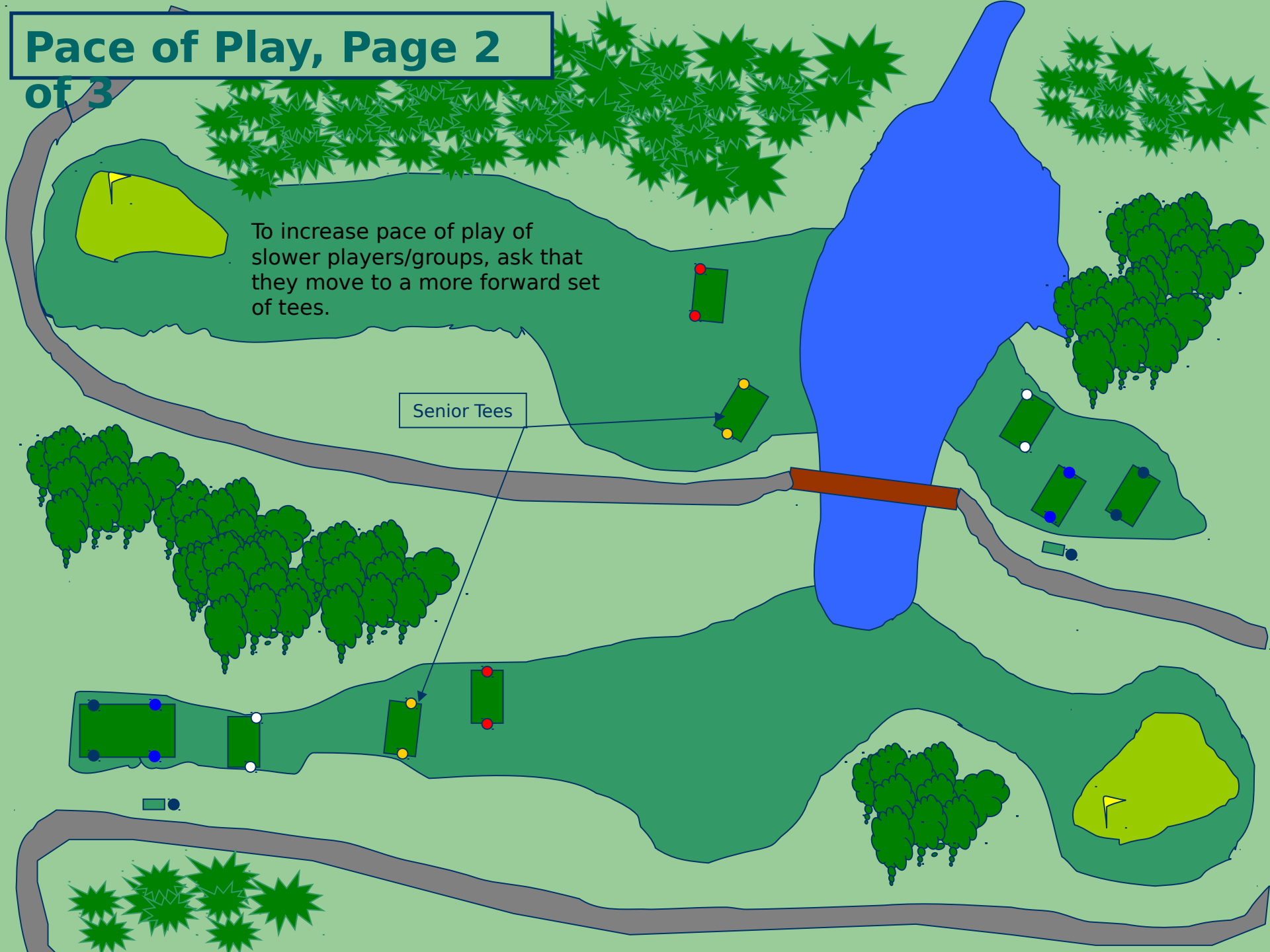
- Establish course “lapse times” for the various player groups/types
- Compare a foursome of “scratch” golfers to a foursome of “high / maximum handicap” golfers
- Use the average of these as the desired round time for all foursomes
- Send groups out based on your course play averages – e.g., tee off every 8-minutes

Pace of Play, Page 1 of 3

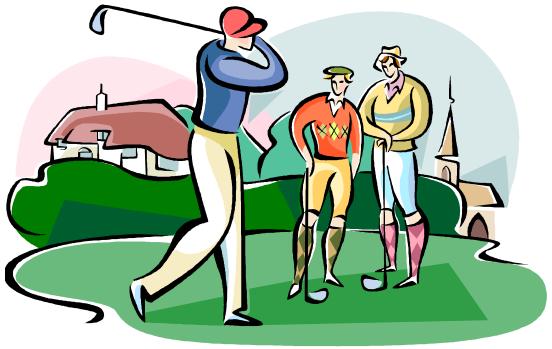


- Establish applicable “lapse times” for each of the golf holes
- Monitor pace of play by recording turn times
- On busy days, form singles and doubles into threesomes and foursomes
- Ask groups of shorter hitters to play their round from a more forward set of tees (See next slide.)
- Ensure players are “ready” to start as soon as the group in front clears the landing area

Pace of Play, Page 2 of 3



Pace of Play, Page 3 of 3



- Encourage “ready golf” (See hand-out.)
- Remind players to play a “provisional ball” whenever they anticipate a “lost ball”
- Remind players to hold their lost ball search to 3-5 minutes
- Explain role of course Marshals/Rangers
- Communicate and work with the Marshals/ Rangers and other on-course staff to keep pace of play up to the course standard

The Rules,
Page 1 of 2

- To assist players, Starters need to study, memorize and apply the following rules:
  - Rules specific to the golf course
  - Golf program policy
  - USGA Golf Rules
  - Traditional rules of golf etiquette
  - Rules governing tournaments / special events

The Rules,
Page 2 of 2

- If you have to approach a player or group concerning a policy violation, inform the player (or group) of the infraction in a courteous and professional manner
- Don’t argue or debate issues, just let the rules speak for themselves

Tournaments,
Page 1 of 3

Starters will often be employed to:

- Facilitate various golf tournaments / outings
- Meet with the golf staff and tournament organizers / committee during the event's planning stages to identify your responsibilities, shifts, etc.
- Review tournament rules and details immediately prior to the tournament date/s
- Help prepare golf carts with partner/team numbers or names

Tournaments,
Page 2 of 3

- Assist with course preparations and post tournament clean-up
- Post and take down applicable signage
- Assist with starting, including player introductions
- Communicate tournament progress to on-course staff
- Assist with posting information to player/ leader boards
- Assist with awards and other post- tournament ceremonies
- Complete other tasks assigned

Tournaments,
Page 3 of 3

- Learn the various tournament formats (whether handicap or not)
  - Medal and Match Play tournaments
  - Scramble
  - Best Ball
  - Alternate Shot
  - Modified Stableford
  - Chapman (Pinehurst)
  - Bingo Bango Bongo
  - Flags
  - Lone Ranger
  - Peoria System
  - Callaway System

This represents but a mere smattering of golf tournaments and games. Visit the sites below for a look at many types of golf games / events.

http://golf.about.com/cs/golfterms/a/formatsbets.htm
http://golf.about.com/cs/beginnersguide/tp/tourneyformats.htm

Weather and Safety,
Page 1 of 2

- Know the daily weather forecast
- Ensure players seek shelter in the club house during lightning – and do so yourself!
- Don’t permit players to park/wait under trees during lightning storms or moderate to high winds
- Dress appropriate to the season and the daily weather forecast
- Know how severe weather is signaled at your base / community

Weather and Safety,
Page 2 of 2

- Know how to signal severe weather when this is your responsibility
- Know how to use the Starter's safety equipment
  - First aid kit
  - Emergency weather signals
- Don't stand, walk, or drive/park golf carts where you might be struck by a golf club or golf ball. (See notes page.)

Additional Information, Page 1 of 2

- Manual for the Operation of Morale, Welfare and Recreation Program, BUPERSINST 1710.11C

  http://www.mwr.navy.mil/mwrprgms/171011c.pdf

- MWR Managers' desk reference and course

  http://www.mwr.navy.mil/trainingresources/mwrmgr.htm

- F&FR Leadership Skills for Managers' desk reference and course

  http://www.mwr.navy.mil/trainingresources/emc_desk_reference_doc.pdf

Additional Information, Page 2 of 2

- Training Nuggets:
  - Customer Service – 101, or Customer Service Basics
  - Accidents – Injury - Illness

  http://138.164.10.95/trainingresources/nuggets.htm
- Follow Protocol – Interactive CD ROM based training
- USGA Rules of Golf

  http://www.usga.org/playing/rules/rules.html
- Handicapping

  http://www.usga.org/playing/handicaps/handicaps.html

That’s all for now…

In the eyes of the customer, you <u>are</u> the golf program!

Suggestions and requests to:

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